

U.S. will offer extra proof set honoring Liberty

By Roger Boye

Uncle Sam will offer two types of proof sets this year in an attempt to further boost sales of Statue of Liberty coins.

One set will contain the traditional five coins [cent through half-dollar] housed in a hard-plastic case. The cost will be \$11, same price charged since 1981.

The other version—dubbed “prestige sets” by U.S. Mint officials—will include those five coins plus a Statue of Liberty commemorative silver dollar and a copper-nickel half dollar. The \$48.50 price also pays for an elegant holder made of suedelike material, according to a mint spokesman.

All seven coins will bear the familiar “S” mint mark. Government workers produce proofs in San Francisco using specially prepared slugs and dies to create mirrorlike finishes free of blemishes.

Most likely, the mint will accept orders until year's end. Hobby pros say there is little chance the number of orders will surpass the mint's production capacity of approximately four million sets. [Collectors bought 2.7 million five-coin proof sets in 1984 and, so far, nearly 3.3 million 1985 sets.]

By late this month, the mint should complete the mailing of proof-set order forms to the two-million persons on its computerized list. Collectors who don't receive a form but want to buy sets should send a check or money order to the United States Mint, P.O. Box 8666, Philadelphia, Pa. 19101-8666.

● On May 1, the federal government will discontinue selling uncut sheets of series 1981-A \$1 bills bearing the signature of former Treasury Secretary Donald T. Regan. However, uncut sheets of series 1985 bills—signed by Treasury Secretary James A. Baker III and U.S. Treasurer Katherine Davalos Oretga—will continue on the market indefinitely.

By mail, a four-bill sheet costs \$9.50; 16 bills, \$28; and 32 bills, \$47. To order, send a cashier's or certified check, or money order, for the exact amount to Bureau of Engraving and Printing, Mail Order Sales, Room 602-11A, 14th and C Streets, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20228. [Buyers should specify whether they want series 1981-A or 1985 bills.]

Meanwhile, officials say they still are offering uncut sheets of series 1976 \$2 bills; prices are \$14.50 for a four-bill sheet and \$45 for 16 notes. The sheets are packaged in hard cardboard form suitable for framing or display.